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A  
MODEST APOLOGY  
FOR THE  
CONDUCT  
OF A  
CERTAIN ADMIRAL  
IN THE  
MEDITERRANEAN.

[Price Six Pence.]

MODEST VIOLETTA

OF THE

GOLD DUCAT

OF

CHRISTIAN ADAM



W. H. W. W. W.

1841



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A

MODEST APOLOGY

FOR THE

CONDUCT

OF A

CERTAIN ADMIRAL

IN THE

MEDITERRANEAN.

BEING AN

ESSAY towards Silencing the Clamorous  
Tongue of SLANDER, 'till Facts can be  
ascertained by substantial and circumstantial  
Evidence.

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*Audi alteram Partem.*

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L O N D O N:

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PREFACE to the PUBLICK.

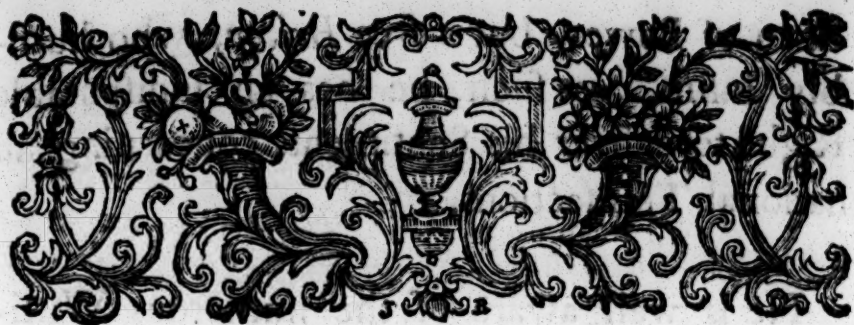
THE following Essay is calculated to display the Folly and Injustice of determining in Matters of Moment by Hearsay, an Error too frequent amongst the *English* — It hath heretofore been thought necessary by Power, occasionally to sacrifice a Victim to State Policy, with Intent to amuse and divert the Populace from diving too deep into Political Mysteries, and tracing Effects up to their Prime Causes: This Finesse

is

is not badly illustrated in the Fable of the Monkey's hugging the Cat, and using her Claw to scratch Chesnuts out of the Fire withal. Far be it from me to suppose this is the Case at present; I would only urge, that every Thing which can be preceded ought to be supposed, while an hitherto innocent Gentleman's Life and Character are at Stake, at least till palpable Demonstration turns all Apology into an Ironical Sarcastm. I end this with entreating my Readers, if possible, to read the following Essay dispassionately.

A Modest





A

## Modest Apology, &c.



O stem the Torrent of Popular Prejudice, is like attempting to alter the Course of the Tides, or to silence the outrageous Noise of the tempestuous Ocean, and therefore far exceeds the most sanguine Success expected from the compiling of this small Essay: The Author of which, however credited, deems it necessary previously to declare, in the most solemn Manner, that he is not biaſſed by Ties of Kindred or otherwise, being an utter Stranger to the Gentleman who occasions this Apology; no, he is an unprejudiced Spectator, one who is no Friend to Opposition, nor Partizan

tizan of Power, but a free *Briton*, who humbly insists, as such, he has an indisputable Right to deliver his Sentiments concerning all national Transactions.

He is well aware of the numerous Witticisms, which will be thrown out upon him and his Subject; and tho' he acknowledges himself an Admirer of Wit, wishes the Smarts of the Age would exhaust their seemingly inexhaustible Funds upon Subjects somewhat less serious; as for the Author's Performance, they must use their Pleasure; but he apprehends, a Gentleman's Life, Reputation, with a long &c. are not Topics fit for the Decision of Public, and Coffee-house Frequenters, those Dabblers in Politics: They truly represent the Madman in the Scriptures, who *casteth Firebrands, Arrows and Death, and wantonly saith, am I not in Sport?*

The *English* are generally too premature in their Applause or Condemnation of public Transactions. In the Time of Sir *R. W——*'s Ministry, the Populace deem'd Admiral *Hofier* to blame, for lying inactive near *Porto Bello*, while Sickness swept away his Forces, till their  
Eyes



Eyes at length were open'd, by the clearing up and discovering of certain Circumstances, by which it appeared that brave Officer had Orders *not to engage*. Thus when it was past Remedy, this unfortunate Gentleman obtained Pity; a slight Redress for a broken Heart and once ruined Reputation.

No Man hath as yet endeavoured to controvert, or call in Question, the many Absurdities, palpable Falshoods, and gross Misrepresentations, which public Rumour hath lately vented about Mr. B——, a Gentleman who deserves a Suspension from such malignant Abuse, at least till Proofs can support Malice, not only upon the Score of Justice and common Humanity, but also of that Veneration the *English* ought ever to pay to the Memory of the great Lord *Torrington*. Far be it from my Meaning, that the Father's glorious Deserts should shade the Son's Defects; I would infer from thence only, that there ought to be a Respite from Slander till positive Proofs appear. In the present Case we have seen a Flood of Abuse flowing in Ballads, Newspapers, Magazines, and public Prints, all founded upon a Letter, or an Extract from one,

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written

written by Mr. B—, and transmitted to the Public in the *London Gazette*, on *Saturday, June 26*, and dated the 25th of *May*. If this Letter be genuine, I fear the Admiral's Confusion has occasioned his hurrying over what a simple Secretary might have carelessly drawn up.

But allowing this to be the Case, I cannot acknowledge any great Misconduct appears to have been committed by the Admiral. How can we tell what Hurry and Confusion he was in, what Intelligence he might have received relating to the Affairs and Situation of the Enemy, which might to him, at that Time, seem to deserve Credit, and induce him to act in the Manner he has done; or, in short, What can be determin'd, 'till the Officer's Orders, Log-books, and Journals, &c. are inspected? Oh, but say his Enemies, Suppositions prove nothing. I say they do prove every Thing I want to prove, which is, that there ought to be a Suspension of Abuse till Truths can be investigated. Let it also be remembered, that whatever has been alledged against this Gentleman, is also founded on Suppositions.

In



In Crimes of the highest Nature it has always been held unjust, to calumniate the Criminal before his Trial, lest, by so doing, you should prejudice him in the Eyes of his Jury. A Judge, unless the Offence is flagrant to the clearest Demonstration, tenderly delivers his Charge to the Jury, and lays the greatest Stress upon what seems to make most for the Service of the Delinquent. Then let us use a Fellow Creature like a human Being, and not wantonly oppress the already falling. I am sorry I am obliged to say, this Behaviour in my Countrymen bears not the Stamp of Christianity. Behaviour like this indicates the greatest Ungenerosity, nay Savage Barbarity, and which would far better become the wild *Indians* in *America*, than the more polish'd Sons of *Britannia*.

We are inform'd, that Mr. B—— was intended to perform great Exploits; and, according to the Opinion of the Populace, he was to perform such as *Don Quixote* never aspir'd to; amongst other Things, he was only to require the Winds and Waves to assist him with a quick Passage; then he was to

make it in his Way to meet, fight, and beat the *French* Fleet; and finally, he was to throw Succours into Fort St. *Philip*, maugre all Opposition he might meet with in the Attempt. I believe Mr. B—— may be a very capable Man, and yet he might not be capable of performing all this, without the particular Interposition of Divine Providence, a Favour which from the Degeneracy of this Nation, I fear we have but too small Reason to expect. As I was passing thro' the *Strand* one Day, I observed two or three Journeymen Joiners mending Mr. B——'s Operations: The Place they had chosen for their Debate was at the Corner of *Exeter Exchange*; I listened some Time, till the Dispute began to grow warm, when on a sudden, hearing a hoarse Noise behind me, I turn'd round, and observ'd a naked Head, bolted thro' a Cobler's Stall, from whence issued the following incoherent Expression; "Damn my Blood, if B—— don't deserve to be scragg'd for not beating the *French* Fleet to Mummy, and landing his Forces at *Mabon*". Upon which it immediately began to roar, instead of a Ribbon, he shall have a String, &c. I walk'd off, and could not help reflecting how ridiculous it was,



was, for Men bred Mechanics, to pretend to determine on the Propriety of an Admiral's Motions in naval Affairs. Yet to prove how far this has been done by People in perhaps a somewhat more elevated Sphere in the *Daily Gazetteer*, and other Papers, which most of my Readers may have seen. There are inserted certain Articles of Impeachment, supposed to have been drawn up at a public House in *Wapping*, whereby Mr. B—— is severely censured. Now to shew how the ignorant may be imposed upon, by a specious Pretence to marine Knowledge, I shall take the Trouble to confute, to a Demonstration, perhaps every one of those Articles. But I shall first, for the Benefit of Landsmen, lay down this as a fixed Principle, that no Man breathing, on Shore, can tell how long a Fleet might be going from *Plymouth* to *Gibraltar*, and thence to *Minorca*; for when the wind is easterly off of Cape *Finisterre*, it may be due West near the Isles of *Scilly*. Therefore how some Gentlemen would calculate the Time when Mr. B—— might have arrived at *Makon*, I cannot imagine, unless they had received some Dispatches from *Lapland*.

ARTICLE

## ARTICLE I.

That he is highly Guilty, for ordering the *Deptford* out of the Line, as he ought to have taken all Advantages to destroy the *French*, and not risqued a Battle on equal Terms, when he could do otherwise,

## OBJECTION I.

Not Guilty for ordering the *Deptford* out of the Line; 'twas a prudent Act, either to supply the Place of a disabled Ship, or to protect her from falling into the Hands of our Adversaries; as also that she might be ready to take Advantage of any of the Enemies Ships when distress'd. Further, a Coward would never have lessened his Number, it being the Nature of Cowardice, never to think itself sufficiently secur'd.

*Note,* It is both usual and necessary, where there is an equal Number of Capital Ships, to throw out the smaller Vessels for the Purposes aforesaid.

ART. 2. Because he did not lead the Van, but gave the Command and his Post of Honour



nour and Danger to his Rear-Chief d'Escadre; whereas he should have led the Van, and by Example spirited-on the other Ships: Which shews he did not intend any Harm to the Enemy.

OBJECT. 2. It is both usual and necessary, to draw a List of the Line, of which every Ship is obliged to have a Copy, wherein it is appointed which Ships are to lead with the Starboard and which with the Larboard Tacks on board; this therefore is determinable by the Wind, which all People know is precarious.

ART. 3. That he might have prevented his Ships from being raked by the Enemy, as he had the Windward Gage, but did not prevent it.

OBJECT. 3. His having the Wind of the Enemy, obliged him to bear down to engage, of Consequence the Enemy laying too to receive him, he could not prevent their Raking him from the Time of coming within Gun-shot, to the Time of closing.

N. B.

*N. B.* It is not a Sea Phrase to say he had the Windward Gage, but nothing better can be expected from such Sailors.

ART. 4. That he suffered his own Ship (according to his own Words) to sustain the Fire of the Enemy for some Time before he engaged his Adversary.

OBJECT. 4. Tis admitted he did so and insisted upon to be right, as he could fire no more than his Forecastle Guns till he came to a close Engagement, which is far preferable to throwing away a few random Shot.

*N. B.* This does not deserve to be stiled Cowardice, most brave Commanders chusing to close e're they engage.

ART. 5. That we suspect this 4th Article, because it is impossible for two capital Ships to engage, without having a Man killed or wounded.

OBJECT. 5. I have known an Instance last War, where two capital Ships engaged for some Hours, wherein one Ship lost only two Men killed, and three wounded, yet the other had near Three-score killed and wounded ;  
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therefore tho' this may be improbable, it is far from being *impossible*.

ART. 6. That it must be owing to ill Conduct for one single Ship to put the whole Line in disorder, by only losing her Fore-top-mast; whereas it might have been repaired in a few Hours.

N. B. What became of her Bowlings, or had she any to her Sails?

OBJECT. 6. What could she do with her Bowlines—tear the Sails to pieces, or can it be supposed that the Bowlines could support the Fore-top-mast with all its Rigging, &c. lying at the Back of the Fore-sail, when the Braces, Tack, &c. were gone; the best Way must certainly be to cut the Top-mast Rigging quite away, and clear themselves from it as fast as possible; its said it might have been repaired in a few Hours, whereas this Confusion don't appear to have lasted, according to the Letter, more than *some Minutes*. The Confusion was far from being general, or extending thro' the Line, tho' Experience has often shewn, that one Ship may disorder best Part of a Line of Battle. N B. The Letter says but a few were disorder'd.

C

ART. 7.

ART. 7. As the Enemy was not to be seen for five Days after, he might have landed his Forces, or at least peeped into *Mahon*; but as he did neither, we think he was afraid of meeting the Enemy off the Mouth of the Harbour.

—But it seems it was not his *Fighting Day*.

OBJECT. 7. Why he did not land his Forces, must appear from the Proceedings of the Council of War, but the Admiral, far from running away, prudently lay refitting his Ships the whole Night, for a fresh Engagement, so that if *Galissonniere* had been as ready as he next Morning, I can't help thinking but it would have prov'd his *Fighting Day*.

N. B. It seems to me that Admiral *West*, who tis allowed proved himself a Man of Courage, would have protested against the Council of War, had there not been some better Reasons than we are acquainted with to induce him to acquiesce, unless it is to be supposed that his *Fighting Day* was past too, which I won't suppose without better Foundation.

ART. 8.



ART. 8. By his ill Conduct, he left the Enemy Masters of the Seas.

OBJECT. 8. This can only be determined by a Council of War.

ART. 9. We look upon his Account that the Enemy failed three to one, to be a Mistake, owing to a Pannic; because, if it had been true, they had it in their Power, in the Attempt they made, to have gained the Windward Gage, by eating us out of the Wind.

OBJECT. 9. One Ship may out-fail another large or right before the Wind, yet may not be able to ply to the Windward so well——there is a great deal in the Building of Shipping which may occasion this Difference; some Ships holding their Wind much better than others; further, the Wind might shift, and be still in our Favour——however, I believe their sailing three Feet to our one may be an Oversight in the Admiral's reading the Letter, probably drawn up by a blundering Secretary; and we ought to reflect, that the Admiral had more Things of Consequence to

take Care of there, than most of us, who can criticize coolly upon his Actions here.

ART. 10. That it does not appear, that Mr. *Bung*, intended any Skirmish, if the *French* had not rudely begun firing upon his Ships.

OBJ. 10. The contrary is apparent, because he, being to Windward, might have chose whether he would have engaged or not; instead of which it is expressly said, he made the Signal to bear down upon *Galissonniere* and engage.

ART. 11. That as the said *Bung* had the Windward Gage, he might have run close on Board the Enemy, and with his Crowd of Sail becalmed them; the Consequence would have been a Victory, as their Ships could not have edged away three Feet in an Hour.

OBJ. 11. As the *French* Ships are said to be the best Sailors, How could he close with and becalm them, when it was in their Power to take or leave at Pleasure; 'tis said, by the



the *English* Fleet's crowding Sail? — Did the *French* then leave their Sails behind them at *Toulon*? If not, Had they not Power to crowd too? Besides, Can any Mortal ascertain a Victory, where the Adversaries are equal, War being so fortuitous?

ART. 12. As he had 13 Sail of the Line to the Enemy's 12, and 52 Guns more than they, he ought not to have acted as a Fribble, and more especially as *Mabon* was at Stake.

For these and many more Reasons we expect he should be brought immediately to the Gang-way, to receive his Reward for Misdemeanors so malignant.

OBJ. 12. This Article was answer'd before; a Fribble would never have diminished his Force, unless it could be proved, that the Admiral had retired himself into the *Deptford*, so dismissed out of the Line.

For the above, and divers other Reasons, I shall postpone my Opinion, till a legal Enquiry is made. Can it be supposed, a Coward would make Interest to go upon an Expedition, he knew must be attended with imminent

nent Hazard of Life and Character; a Gentleman, according to Report, possessed too of a very plentiful Fortune. As to the pretended Delay of Mr. B—— in setting out, the Nature of his Instructions, &c. not being acquainted with the Arcana's of the Cabinet, I must leave them intwin'd, with other State Mysteries, to be untwisted by Time (perhaps sooner) at least at the final Disclosure of all Things. Thus much I must say, that had repeated Orders, as given out, been sent to Mr. B—— to fail, tis hardly probable, that he would have been *permitted* to have disregarded such Orders. But to proceed,

'Tis a lamentable Circumstance, if the false Reports given out of an Officer Abroad, should occasion his Disgrace among the Populace at Home, when tis possible those very Reports might be rais'd primarily by our profess'd Enemies, the Reason for which might be, their being too sensible of such Officer's Abilities, with respect to the intended Expedition. I say, if this is the Case, 'twould be dreadful, should such Incendiaries gain their Ends; this must deter experienc'd Officers from offering their Service to the Government at any Exigency,



gency, not caring to run so great a Risk of losing their Characters. — May the Means be ever remembered, whereby the *English* were deprived of that great and good Man Sir *Walter Raleigh*; his being too well acquainted with *South America*, made him obnoxious to the *Spanish* Court, which, after repeated Efforts for many Years, work'd his Downfall, by the Assistance of cursed Gold, and the Intrigues of *Gondomor*.

Thus far, in the Pursuance of my Plan, I have endeavoured to divest myself of all Party Prejudices, and to speak like a *Citizēu* of the *World*; I shall now close, with declaring, that if Mr. B—— should be found, after a candid Examination, guilty; I shall readily, and doubt not every true *Briton*'s joining with me, in wishing he may meet with the most exemplary Punishment, as a Traitor to his native Country, and most gracious Sovereign, whom may God out of his infinite Mercy long protect, &c.

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